

To try to give some order to this list, it's broken down into general directions (as the crow flies) from Chatham: [North](#) , [East](#) , and [West](#) . While a direct route isn't always convenient for the faint of heart (for example to reach South Boston, the safest way is to travel south to Danville and then easterly on US-58), opportunities abound for the adventurous that want to get off the well-beaten paths of Southside Virginia.

Attractions between 1 and 2 hours to the South aren't listed, since this includes a large fraction of the Piedmont Triad including the major cities of Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Durham, and Raleigh. As can be expected for regions immediately surrounding metropolitan areas, an extremely large number of opportunities are available to meet a variety of interests.

The Blue Ridge Parkway

(from Chatham, it appears to run from the Southwest to the Northeast).

The Blue Ridge Parkway is literally the "Backbone" of a great scenic mountain region embracing the Southern (and highest) portion of the Appalachian mountain range, an area of approximately 20,000 square miles. Opening up vast mountain areas for the benefit and enjoyment of all, the Parkway forms a broad avenue of approach, and at the same time a high balcony from which to view the natural wonders of this mountain region. This great 469.1-mile scenic parkway follows closely the highest ridges between the Shenandoah and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, attaining altitudes of more than 6,000 feet and averaging between 3,000 and 4,000 feet. It is designed especially for leisurely enjoyment of the scenic wonders along the way - a high road of adventure intended for gypsy-like travel on the ride awhile, stop-awhile basis. The numerous overlooks provide parking areas from which to enjoy some of America's finest scenic views.

To the North

Near Bedford (1 hr, 30 min)

Peaks of Otter Wilderness Area

The Peaks of Otter is formed by three mountains positioned in a triangular pattern - Sharp Top Mountain (3,875 feet), Flat Top Mountain (4,001 feet), and Harkening Hill (3,372 feet). A beautiful mountain lake rests at the triangle's center. The Blue Ridge Parkway passes through

mountain passes and intersects with Virginia Highway 43 at mile marker 85.9. The Appalachian Trail passes only a few miles to the North and can be easily accessed via the Blue Ridge Parkway. **National D-day Memorial**

Operation Overlord (D-day) and the Allied Forces, who took part, did nothing less than save the world for freedom-loving people. The National D-day Memorial located in Bedford, VA remembers these valiant troops and their sacrifice. Bedford VA was chosen for the site of the National D-day Memorial due to the fact that per capita Bedford lost more sons during the first few hours of the D-day invasion than any other community in the USA **Natural Bridge (2 hrs, 15 min.)**

The Natural Bridge site actually is composed of five attractions. The most famous is the Natural Bridge, one of the 7 Natural Wonders of the World, a 100 million year old, 215 feet tall, 90 feet wide, rock arch formation. Nestled between the Blue Ridge and Alleghany Mountain ranges in the Southern Shenandoah Valley, Natural Bridge provides a unique, historic, picturesque and natural experience. You may explore the Monacan Village and Nature Park. Additionally, you can explore the Caverns, Wax, Toy, and Monster Museums.

The Caverns are east coast's deepest commercial caverns, originally explored by Col. Henry Parsons in 1889-91. Tours descend 34 stories into the earth, and features information about our underground world. The Wax museum features full-sized wax representations of famous people and historic scenes. The Toy Museum At Natural Bridge is the largest collection of childhood memorabilia on display in the world dating from 1740 to 2000. Professor Cline's Haunted Monster Museum has been called one of the "7 Weird Wonders of Virginia" by the Washington Post.

Near Appomattox (1 hr, 30 min)

Appomattox Court House National Historical Park

Relive the drama of the closing days of the Civil War. Park personnel and slide presentations brief you on the background of the park at the visitor information center, located in the courthouse building.

Your visit includes such highlights as the McLean House, where the actual surrender took place, the Clover Hill Tavern, where parole passes were printed, and the surrender triangle, where the stacking of arms occurred. Period re-enactors add an element of living history to your visit. You will feel the presence of Generals Lee and Grant as you walk the street of the restored village. Summer hours, daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Winter hours, daily 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; (434) 352-8987.

An Evening Stroll Through Old Appomattox

Step back in time with the former sheriff and county clerk of Appomattox Court House, George T. Peers. Experience a first-person, living history tour through the village of Appomattox Court House in the summer of 1867 with Mr. Peers. Mr. Peers was born and raised in the county and because of his clerking duties he knew perhaps more than anyone about the area. Join Mr. Peers at the Confederate Cemetery where the tour will begin. Tours are every Friday and Saturday evening at 7:00 pm from May 28 - Sept. 3rd. (Tours also available on some holidays). Cost is \$6.00 per person. For more information click here. **Clover Hill Village**

A living history village located on Route 627, approximately 3.5 miles from town. Open April through October - Grounds open daily 9:00 AM to dusk. Guided building tours Thursday through Sunday 1-4. Special hours and group tours by appointment. **Fred's Car Museum**

More than sixty-five classic and antique automobiles made from 1906 to 1980 can be seen under one roof at the car museum. Everything from the classic 1957 Chevrolet to very rare and seldom seen cars are right here in Fred's Car Museum. One of the most rare cars in the museum is a 1939, V-12 Lincoln Limousine, one of only four ever made! Come see a 1906 Schacht Mfg. Company horseless carriage, a 1914 Saxton, a 1920 Piano Box Buggy, and a 1936 Packard. There is even a 1962 Rolls Royce, a classic 1946 fire engine and a Chevrolet truck that nobody can figure out the date of its manufacture. There is also a very well stocked gift shop at the museum where you can purchase gifts and souvenirs including T-shirts and a model of your favorite classic automobile. **Red Hill (1 hour, 15 minutes)**

Red Hill, the Patrick Henry National Memorial, is the last home and burial place of the orator of liberty and Virginia's first elected governor. Visitors can view an introductory fifteen-minute video on Patrick Henry's career and his life at Red Hill before visiting the Red Hill Museum. There follows a tour of Red Hill's seven historic buildings, the Patrick Henry grave site, and the grounds overlooking the Staunton River Valley, which appears much as it did in Henry's time. Some of Red Hill's special programs include an annual 4th of July celebration which features Revolutionary War-era re-enactors and concludes with an evening fireworks display, Christmas Candlelight Open House with guided tours, music and refreshments, and the Annual Governor Henry Lecture series. Check their calendar for other events of interest. **Holliday Lake State Park (1 hr, 30 min)**

Deep in the heart of Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest, Holliday Lake State Park is a paradise for the outdoor enthusiast. Fishing for largemouth bass, crappie and bluegill is a popular activity in the 150-acre lake within the park. The nearby state Department of Game and Inland Fisheries delayed-harvest trout stream allows anglers to fish for brown and rainbow trout. The park also features excellent trails open to hikers, bikers and equestrians. Swimming is a popular summer activity at the park's life-guarded beach. Interpretive and environmental education programs also are available for school and scout groups. This park is just minutes from the famous Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, the site of General Robert E. Lee's surrender to General Ulysses S. Grant in 1865.

To the East

South Boston area (approx 1 hr, 20 min)

Berry Hill

A premier monument of the American Greek Revival, Berry Hill's unforgettable mansion was erected in 1842-44 for James Coles Bruce, one of Virginia's most affluent planters. Fronted by a heroic octastyle portico in the Doric order of the Parthenon, Berry Hill is flanked by porticoes dependencies forming a dramatic architectural ensemble. No less impressive is the lofty interior with its grand divided stair, plaster ceilings medallions, and imported marble mantels. A colonnaded service wing projects from the rear. The house stands in a large semicircular landscaped park. On the property is one of the state's largest slave cemeteries and the ruins and sites of numerous slave quarters. 3105 River Road, South Boston, VA **The Prizery**

Located in the historic tobacco warehouse district in downtown South Boston, the 38,000 square foot building includes a welcome center, a performing arts theatre, an art gallery,

classrooms and a large space for community functions. It is adjacent to the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center. Community Arts Center Foundation, 700 Bruce Street, South Boston, VA 24592, (434) 572-8339 **Prestwoud Plantation**

The plantation, situated on Buggs Island Lake, is a stone manor house built 1790-1795 by Sir William Peyton Skipwith. The house is noted for its exquisite French scenic wallpaper. Located 2 miles north of Clarksville, Virginia off U.S. 15., (434) 374-8672. **The South Boston - Halifax County Museum of Fine Arts & History**

Open Wednesday to Saturday (10-4) and Sundays (2-4:30), the museum contains Civil War artifacts, glassware, Hummels, Indian artifacts, military uniforms, collections from Halifax County founding families and special exhibits of arts and crafts. Admission is free. 1540 Wilborn Avenue, South Boston, Virginia 24592 (434) 572-9200 **South Boston Speedway**

Located on U. S. 58/360 East in South Boston, Virginia, (434) 572-4947, sponsors stock and modified races in the spring, summer and fall. www.southbostonspeedway.com **VIR - Virginia International Raceway**

Virginia International Raceway is located 12 miles east of Danville, VA, and close to Milton, NC. It features a 4000 ft back straight and a 3000 ft long straight, and varies in height by 150 ft. The north course consists of 19 corners, the north course 15 corners, and the south course 8 corners, with widths varying between 30 and 36 feet. First opened in 1957, it was closed in 1974. It has reopened to feature a variety of modern and classic motorsports activities for both spectators and participants at all levels. Carroll Shelby is reported to have commented in 1957: "One lap here is like 100 at Watkins Glen." 1245 Pine Tree Road, Alton, Virginia 24520, Phone: 888.RACE099, 434.822.7700, FAX 434.822.8033

To the West

Booker T. Washington National Monument (1 hr, 30 min)

On April 5, 1856, a child who later called himself Booker T. Washington, was born in slavery on this 207-acre tobacco farm. The realities of life as a slave in piedmont Virginia, the quest by African Americans for education and equality, and the post-war struggle over political participation all shaped the options and choices of Booker T. Washington. Washington founded Tuskegee Institute in Alabama in 1881 and later became an important and controversial leader of his race at a time when increasing racism in the United States made it necessary for African Americans to adjust themselves to a new era of legalized oppression. Visitors are invited to step back in time and experience firsthand the life and landscape of people who lived in an era when slavery was part of the fabric of American life. 12130 Booker T. Washington Highway, Hardy, VA 24101, Phone (540) 721-2094, Fax (540) 721-8311 **Smith Mountain Lake Area (45-90 minutes)**

Smith Mountain Lake is the second largest body of freshwater in the state. Smith Mountain Lake State Park offers a full range of water related activities, including swimming, fishing and boating, as well as miles of hiking trails, housekeeping cabins, primitive camping, picnicking, a visitor center and interpretive programs. **Near Roanoke (1 hour, 45 min)**

Science Museum of Western Virginia

The Science Museum of Western Virginia features a 45-station Science Arcade, all hands-on fun! Children also love the Illusions Gallery, where things aren't all as they appear. The Hopkins Planetarium and MegaDome Theater are part of the total package of this kid-friendly fun place.

Mill Mountain Zoo

On top of Roanoke's Mill Mountain, alongside the famous Roanoke star. Exhibits over 50 species of animals, Zoochoo, Gift Shop, concessions. Open daily - year-round. www.mmzoo.org (540) 343-3241. **Virginia Museum of Transportation**

Downtown Roanoke-trains, vehicles, model train layout, gift shop. Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 12-5. www.vmt.org. (540) 342-5670. **Virginia's Explore Park**

Living history demonstrations, special events, historic restaurant, and recreational venues such as hiking, mountain biking, fishing and canoeing/kayaking. The historical site is open Wednesday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm and on Sunday from Noon to 5 pm May through October. The recreation sites and the Brugh Tavern are open year round. Special events held throughout the season. Web Page www.explorepark.org. Call (800) 842-9163. **Ne**

ar Martinsville (1 hour, 15 min)

Martinsville Speedway

Martinsville Speedway, located 3 mi. south of Martinsville, Va. near the North Carolina border, is one of NASCAR's deepest roots. The 0.526-mile asphalt speedway, built as a dirt track and paved in 1955, has grown from a dusty, rough-hewn operation into one of the most beautiful and modern racing facilities in existence. It has been called the "Augusta National" of racetracks and the "family race track." Martinsville is the last of the original NASCAR-sanctioned tracks to run Winston Cup events. Today, Martinsville Speedway covers over 200 acres and seats over 56,000. It has 800-foot straights, short, tight turns banked at only 12 degrees and has been called "two drag strips with short turns." The track has 25 corporate suites, a chalet village for tent entertainment, a 115-seat press box, high-rise grandstands, free parking, and a fully-staffed medical Infield Care Center. Martinsville is a driver's track where exchanging paint is commonplace and no car completes 500 laps without body damage. **Fairy Stone State Park**

Home of the mysterious fairy stones, which are shaped like St. Andrew's and Roman crosses, Fairy Stone State Park is located in Patrick County off of Route 57, northwest of Martinsville. Outdoor adventures include trails for biking, hiking and horseback riding. Its 168-acre lake adjoining Philpott Reservoir is located near the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Swimming and freshwater fishing can be enjoyed along the sandy banks of the lake. Visitors can rent rowboats, paddleboats and canoes; motorboats are permitted on the reservoir only. **B**

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North Carolina Zoological Park (2:15)

The Zoo is the world's largest natural habitat zoo. The zoo's African region features eight outdoor exhibits, and the pavilion includes over 200 animals. The new North American region is 200 acres featuring approximately 800 animals. Located on Zoo Parkway in Asheboro, NC off U.S. 220, (800) 488-0444.